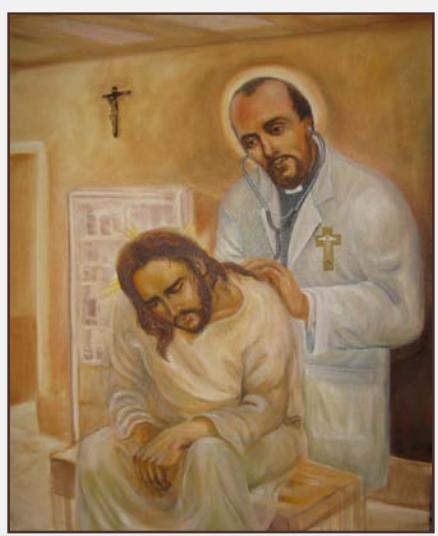




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## ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

The Painting That Says It All



## ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

### The Painting That Says It All

## Introduction

In this painting, St. Anthony Mary Zaccaria, as a doctor, attends with tenderness and love to a sick person whose body radiates light, illuminating Christ in him. This confirms Christ's very own words: "Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do it to me."

"Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do it to me." (Matthew 25:45)

St. Anthony Mary must have meditated upon this when he said in his sermon: *"Believe that the love of neighbor both effects the love of God and manifests it."* *"Do you wish to love God and be dear to Him and be His good children? Love your neighbor; take your neighbor as your compass; resolve to do good to your neighbor and never to offend him."* It is true that St. Anthony Mary dedicated his whole sermon about the importance of loving one's "*neighbor*"—the neighbor whom Christ calls "*my brethren*." *"One and the same thing —love of neighbor—helps you acquire, expand, and increase [the love of God] more and more and reveals it when it is present."* And St. Anthony Mary resolved in saying, *"Therefore, I want to acquire this love."*

Having seen the situation of his time, with the continuing outbreaks of plague and pestilence, St. Anthony felt the need to help his “*neighbor*,” especially the sick. He took up medicine and finished the course and became a doctor.

While working as a doctor, he realized that there was a far greater need in taking care of his neighbor’s spiritual infirmity than his physical infirmity. St. Anthony Mary then became a priest. “*I have decided to devote myself to the care of the spiritual welfare of my neighbor*.”

His knowledge of medicine gave him a great capacity to do his priestly ministry. Being aware of the medicine necessary to cure sickness, he knew how to deal with the “sickness” of his time, that of the growing decadence of spiritual life and the banishing fervor of the Christian life. He saw lukewarmness as the “*most pernicious and greatest enemy*” to combat. And he did. Yet, he combated it with the most tenderness of a doctor, but the strength of a reformer. He went about curing and reforming the lives of his neighbor, encouraging them to “*return to God*.”

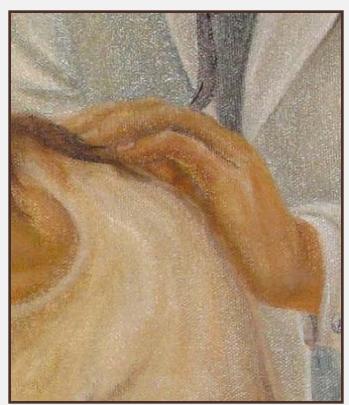
And nowadays, in our time, St. Anthony Mary’s challenge still resounds: “*Spend your time helping your neighbor*.” For “*the way to love God is to love our neighbor*.” Indeed, “*God has made your neighbor the road to reach His Majesty*.”

St. Anthony Mary was the doctor and reformer of the sixteenth century who zealously took care of the “*neighbor*” he was talking about—the “*brethren*” of Christ—and consumed his life, to die at an early age, in living out this gospel truth: “*Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do it to me*.”

Indeed, this painting exposes to us this truth, but at the same time it presents to us St. Anthony Mary’s invitation: “*devote [yourselves] to the care of... [your] neighbor*”—Jesus Christ Himself.

# Meditations on...

- ❖ Light Touch
- ❖ **Soft Whisper**
- ❖ Eyes of Faith
- ❖ **The Bench**
- ❖ Jesus' Clothes
- ❖ **Jesus Prays**
- ❖ Sealed Lips
- ❖ **Hands Invisibly Bound**
- ❖ Bowed Body
- ❖ **The Crucifix**
- ❖ A Closer Look at the Crucified Savior
- ❖ **The Light of the Risen Christ**



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ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

### The Painting That Says It All

## Light Touch

**O**f the five senses, *touch* seems to be the most emphasized in the Gospels. “*If I but touch his clothes, I will be made well*” (Mark 5: 28). Jesus turned about in the crowd and said, “Who touched my clothes?” (Mark 5: 30) *Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see*” (Luke 24:39). “They came to Bethsaida, and some people brought a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him” (Mark 8:22). “Then he went up and touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still” (Luke 7:14). “Jesus said to her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father” (Jn 20:17). And still many other Bible passages.

St. Anthony Mary puts his hand lightly on the back of Jesus. He touches Jesus’ back almost with a sense of delicateness and reverence. We can say that this touch has caused Jesus’ body to radiate light—such a profound reaction toward the positive energy that this touch transmits.

How many of us experienced being consoled, encouraged, praised, and congratulated by a friend with

a “pat on the back”? I happened to check the word “pat” in the dictionary. It says: *strike lightly, light blow, light touch*. Light and touch. *Light* emanates from Jesus’ body as St. Anthony Mary *touches* his back.

It’s amazing what *touch* can do in our sensitive humanity. Jesus used this gesture to make people feel loved, cared for, and welcomed—yes, he used it to heal and impart tenderness toward those who came to Him for healing.

A particular account of St. Anthony Mary’s childhood relives this *touch* toward the poor he came in contact with. On one winter day, when returning home from school, he met a poor beggar shivering in the cold. *Touched* by his condition, Anthony Mary gave him his silk mantle. The poor beggar was grateful, apparently *touched* by Anthony Mary’s concern.

It’s true. It only takes a simple gesture to heal a sick, wounded soul—only a simple *touch* to transform a body in pain into a glorious one.

*“Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man.... Immediately he was cured of his leprosy”* (Matt. 8:3).



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ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

**The Painting That Says It All**

**Soft Whisper**

**W**hen you hear the phone ringing and pick up the receiver, what is it that you expect to hear? Certainly, you expect to hear a word of salutation, a friendly greeting, or a cordial speech. But this does not happen every time. Sometimes, what you hear is a sharp word or an insensitive comment or a tactless discourse or—worse still—a banging of the phone at the other end of the line.

From the doctor St. Anthony Mary, you would not expect such a “blunt” reception. St. Anthony Mary knows how to treat people as they ought to be treated. He is sensitive to their feelings as much as he is to his own.

Sick people, we are aware, are the most delicate individuals to deal with. In their situation, they only expect to be treated with patience and gentleness—yes, with a little bit of humanity.

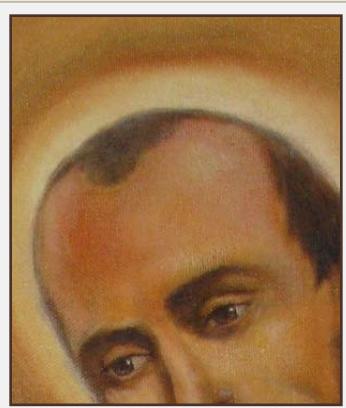
Here, we can imagine St. Anthony Mary speaking to Jesus. But with his lips barely open, we can muse, that

he makes only a soft whisper to say the gentlest words to Jesus.

Jesus “*will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets*” (Matt 12:19). Certainly, from Jesus’ example, St. Anthony Mary understood that amidst excruciating situations, he needs not to be loud but to be gentle and calm.

Isn’t it true that an empty can makes more noise than a full can? Many times, loud talks, endless chats, screaming, and shouting can mean exactly that—emptiness. And we know that this emptiness can only be filled by God’s presence in us. Exactly, at this moment, St. Anthony Mary relishes Jesus’ presence. No wonder he only makes whispers to him.

“*The Lord said, ‘Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.’*” There was a powerful wind, an earthquake, a fire, “*but the Lord was not*” in them. “*After... came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.*” (1 Kings 19:11-13)



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ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

**The Painting That Says It All**

**Eyes of Faith**

**F**or “they look, but don’t see” (Matthew 13:13). Jesus, quoting Isaiah’s words, explains to his disciples his use of parables. St. Anthony Mary, confronted by a parable of human suffering, unquestionably looks but also sees. He sees Jesus’ suffering. He sees his pain and anguish. He sees what it takes for him to love humanity. *“O limitless mercy! O infinite love! God humbled Himself so much in order that man might love Him back, and through this love be saved.”*

Too often “our response to God’s love is indifference.” Rather, St. Anthony Mary, with an obviously intense look, urges us: *“Love God above all things and everything else for His sake.”*

*“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see”* (Mark 10:51). The man’s sight was completely restored. Jesus grants our every desire to see if we only ask him—in faith. Yes, it is this faith that makes us see even when our physical eyes are shut in darkness. It is through this faith that “we come to know” and understand our

Savior's immense sacrifice. For, indeed, God's "*spiritual activity cannot be seen except with the eyes of the mind and of the spirit*," that is, with the eyes of faith.

In one of his sermons, St. Anthony Mary exclaims with a sense of gratitude: "*Thanks be to God for blinding us so as to enable you to see better!*" This affirms St. Anthony Mary's willingness to do anything for the sake of others. For he knows what it is to be blind: *If your eyes are blind and adulterous, can you imagine what the rest of your body will be?*" And so he says: "*I invite you, I entreat you, and I compel you in Christ and for Christ to open your eyes*" and fix them "*on God all the time*" for this is what "*true spiritual life consists*."

Let us then turn our eyes on the One who can make us see beyond the visible, tangible things of the earth, beyond what the hands can touch - indeed, beyond what our eyes can see. And when we had finally entrusted ourselves to Him, He will say to us: "*Go. Your faith has healed you.*"



ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

### The Painting That Says It All

## The Bench

**I**t's not a royal throne. Jesus sits on a humble seat, a simple hospital bench to rest himself. Jesus sits not on a judgment seat. He sits on a common bench to "pronounce" compassion and "give sentences" of mercy and love.

*"As he taught, Jesus said, 'Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to... have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets'" (Mark 12: 38-39). Jesus admonishes, "Not so with you" (Luke 22:26). "Don't sit in the seat of honor" (Luke 14:18).*

We must all be familiar with the game "Trip to Jerusalem." In this game everybody dances and tries to get a seat when the music stops. Anyone who does not get a seat is eliminated. Our life most often is like this game. We contend with others to get a seat for ourselves, it matters not if somebody is left out because of our lack of courtesy and politeness. *"Not so with you"* Jesus warns us.

Sitting on a bench, Jesus demonstrates to us what he would choose to do—to be humble, poor and simple; to prefer the lowliest place; to let others, rather than ourselves, have the “*seat of honor*.”

Right here, we see the Master and the King of the Universe who sits on the bench. Truly this makes the difference. The bench in itself does not have any value until Jesus sits on it. “*Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred?*” (Matthew 23:19) Indeed, it is Jesus who gives value to the “benches” of our lives.

Yet, look how Jesus devalues himself. St. Paul very well emphasized it: Jesus “*made Himself poor in this world, that we might become rich.*” We can very well say then that Jesus willingly made his “trip to Jerusalem.” And we know how that trip went and ended.

Indeed, may our concern be not of taking the “*important seat*” or the “*seat of honor*” but of striving to emulate our Savior’s humility and poverty. These are Jesus’ bench, the privileged seat, which we all must strive to take when we dance again in the game of life.



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ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

**The Painting That Says It All**

## Jesus' Clothes

**T**hey “wrapped him in swaddling clothes” (Lk 2:12). They wrapped him in order to “keep him still and calm.”

A baby is naturally vibrant and pulsating with energy. Jesus who chose to come down as a babe, allows himself to be wrapped to contain his first impulse of vigor to do things for his heavenly Father, the very Source and Reason for his earthly existence.

“*My time has not yet come,*” (Jn 7:6) he himself would confess later when he was already able to reason out. As a sweet babe he rests himself still to wait for the time planned out for him by his Father. He never wants to go on his own or out of the right course, even if “*nothing is impossible*” (Lk 1:37) with him. He allows the Father to guide and direct his life on earth. Indeed, we see the tremendous obedient disposition of Jesus even from his birth. Otherwise, St. Anthony Mary would have reason to express in this way: “*Woe to me! If all my children care so little about making me happy, would it not be better for me to have never begotten them, rather than to see them degenerate?*”

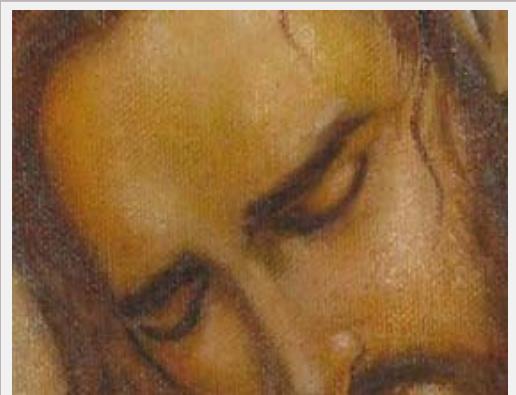
*"Oh please, my friends consider the love of mothers. These good women do not eat or sleep without thinking of their children."* St. Anthony Mary recognizes this from his own experience with his mother who, widowed at a young age, took care of him and taught him Christian virtues. Besides, he was introduced by her to the devotion of the Mother of Jesus. Mary became for St. Anthony Mary his heavenly Mother and Model. This explains his second name, "Mary."

Mary wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes. This prefigures her role as a mother who would ensure the safety and growth of her child, cost what it may. With her is Joseph. In the stable, they stay around Jesus, lovingly attending to their child's needs. This is the first Christmas of the Holy Family, which all families in the world try to remember each year. It is truly a moment of love, care, and joy.

The swaddling clothes predominates the rustic environment of the stable. The white color contrasts the dim night and the sober attitude of those around. Jesus it is who contrasts our subdued and quelled humanity. It is he who uplifts our spirits and gives vitality to our being. The baby, wrapped, immobile, attests the very power of the Incarnate Son in his frail human nature. "*O the wonder of the stupendous art [Jesus] manifests.*"

St. Anthony Mary, without doubt, did witness and experience this power. Jesus' white clothes make him recall of the solemn birth of the "son of a carpenter", the son of a "woman of Nazareth", the son of the Most High God, in Bethlehem, where a choir of angels sings: "*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will*" (Lk 2:14).

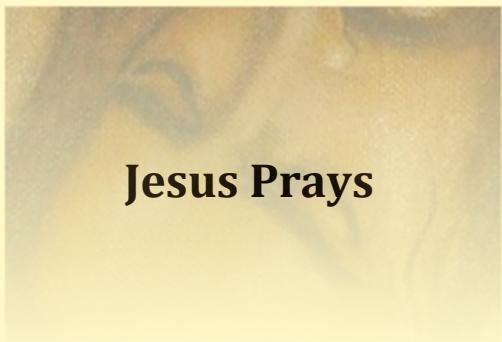
*"I am overwhelmed with joy."* Before such a mystery, St. Anthony feels no other emotion but a deep sense of joy. Truly, God manifests Himself in different ways, but the ultimate of these is Jesus who became "God-with-us."



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ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

**The Painting That Says It All**



## Jesus Prays

**H**e absorbs all the pain. He closes his eyes. He prays. He lets himself be amidst what he has to bear out of love for fallen humanity.

He never shows a look of contempt, of judgment, or of blame. He closes his eyes, forgiving every pain we caused him. "I'll take it all for you." Jesus seems to tell us.

*"Father, you gave them to me.... Keep them safe by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one just as you and I are one"* (Jn 17:6, 11). Jesus earnestly prays for us to the Heavenly Father. We can presume that he repeated this prayer at Gethsemane, or even on the cross. But whether he did or not, we know that Jesus is there to plead for us to the Father.

St. Anthony Mary urges his followers: "*We give ourselves to prayer.*" St. Anthony Mary assuredly believes that prayer is their only assurance of God's

abiding presence and continuing guidance in their mission and apostolate. And if his followers had to remain faithful to God, if they had to be strong in their daily challenges, if they had to accomplish great things for God and their neighbor, then they would have to pray.

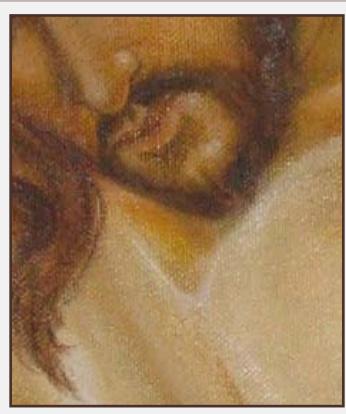
Jesus closes his eyes. He closes them to draw all his attention together and concentrates it to the Source and Font of his existence. “Father...” It’s a powerful word that signifies one’s closeness with the One being called upon. When our whole person is concentrated in God we become close to Him, and our word can only be “Father...” In this instance, we come *“face to face”* with God and we see Him *“as He is.”* We will come to know that He is not a distant God but a Father who loves His children... even to the point of sacrificing His own Son.

This image portrays another important lesson for us: the capacity to listen. Closing the eyes shuts out the other senses to make us able to listen more intently with God in prayer.

God speaks to us. And yet, how many of us fail to listen to Him? In our daily relationships, we experience the displeasure and hurt of not being listened to, by someone who walks away before we could even finish speaking. We can imagine the same discomforting reactions by God in our regard when we do not listen to Him.

*“Listen, O Israel!”* Listening is attached to the first commandment to *“love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength”* (Mark 12:29-30). In fact, it comes first to be done before doing what God wants us to do.

May our life be an attentive listening to God who speaks to us in prayer.



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ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

**The Painting That Says It All**

## Sealed Lips

**H**ave you ever experienced nagging at someone, lashing out words of displeasure to him, and then that someone just keeps quiet, pretending not to hear what you said? Jesus “*kept quiet*” before Pilate, “*and Pilate was amazed*” (Mark 15:5).

It’s true. We feel a sense of guilt when someone we have vilified takes in silently all that we have said, and done. “*Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him.*” (Matt 26:67). “*But the young Fisherman answered not his Soul, but closed his lips with the seal of silence...*” (*The Fisherman and His Soul*, Oscar Wilde)

Words are, many at times, superfluous and unnecessary. Gestures are enough; actions convey better; examples are a stronger witness. Pope Paul VI made the powerful comment, “*Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.*” Indeed, our witness is a silent word comes alive.

Jesus closes his lips not in displeasure or disgust. He closes them so that he may only speak “actions” of love rather than “words” of condemnation and bitterness. He seals his lips so that he may not express sighs and groaning of disappointment but only an assurance of forgiveness and compassion.

St. Anthony Mary says: *“I have written this letter to you, not with pen, but with my heart”*. Anthony Mary affirms that external utterances are in fact superficial—*“like a clanging cymbal”* as St. Paul says—when they do not come from the heart.

May we then learn to seal our lips in silence to let love flow from our heart... and soon we will find the whole world “amazed” at us.



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ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

**The Painting That Says It All**

**Hands  
Invisibly  
Bound**

**“S**o they bound Jesus” (Mark 15:1). Those hands that once touched the leper, the sick, the possessed, and the dead are now bound—one over the other—immovable. Pain runs down through his vein, down to his hands. Jesus keeps his hands still, not moving them an inch to show resistance. “In my hands, I accept all that the Father wills for me.”

We see a father raising his hand to punish his child. Jesus holds his hands still not to do us any harm.

*“If your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell”* (Matt 5:30). In fact, the hand can do many evil things as well as good ones. It can cause us trouble—as when we hurt somebody or steal things that do not belong to us. It can also be a source of blessing—as when a priest blesses us with the sign of the cross or when we use the hand to reach out to those in need.

St. Anthony Mary, in his writings, mentions the hand quite a few times: *“Everything is kept safe as long as God holds out His hands”* (Sermon III). *“How can the mind and the hand*

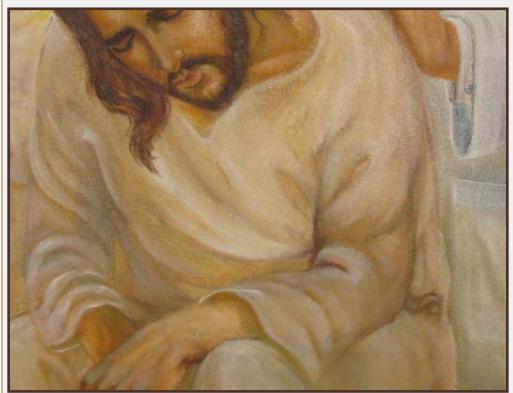
*simultaneously do different things?" (Constitutions, Chapter X)  
"We should not make too much fuss about what is going on because everything is possible with God—an undeniable truth that we almost touch with our own hands" (Letter IV). "Don't you see that He Himself has opened the doors for you with His own hands? (Letter VI)*

St. Paul says that all parts of the body are important (1 Cor 12:12-26). The hands are indeed! Yet Jesus allowed his hands to be bound... and later, to be fixed with nails on the cross. *O the wonder of the stupendous art [Jesus] manifests in everything He does!* Yes, he allows his hands to be bound that we might be free!

Jesus certainly knows we have been "*created free*," free to make "*moral choices, including either accepting or rejecting God's grace.*" And he respects that. Not wanting to impose himself on our freedom, he lets himself be bound.

And yet St. Anthony Mary hopes that while we choose to "*walk toward God in absolute freedom*" we seek always "*the honor of God and the good of our neighbors.*"

Indeed, "*may the ample freedom,*" which we have, "*be for [us] a sure guarantee that [our] undertakings will conclude happily with profit to all*" and to God's greater glory.



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ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

**The Painting That Says It All**

## Bowed Body

**J**esus' body is bowed: bowed by the grief of his heart; buckled by intense pain; curled in humble submission; bent in surrender.

*"Ecce homo!" "Here is the man!"* (Jn 19:5) Jesus goes through it all by himself. He is one of us, a man like us.

Looking closely at this image, we see Jesus who bends to wash the feet of the disciples, Jesus who writes on the ground in the story of the adulterous woman, and Jesus who carries the cross on his back to Golgotha.

*"O infinite love! God humbled Himself..."* St. Anthony Mary expresses this word with the most intense expression, almost stirring us up to open our hearts and minds to understand Jesus' self-abnegation. Jesus humbles himself in obedience to the Father. He bows to say: *"Your will be done."*

The three families—Barnabites, Angelics, and Laity of St. Paul—founded by St. Anthony Mary, at the

beginning of their mission, suffered persecution. This was for them a cross to carry on their back—a cross that would cause them “*abundant tears*” but that they were willing to “bow” to carry “*for the love of Our Lord, who had died for us.*” St. Anthony exhorted them: “*As you well know, our Savior and heavenly Teacher foretold that similar things would happen to us, so that we would not be surprised as if they were new and unexpected. He confirmed it by His example, so that we would not fear to experience them as being unbearable.*”

Jesus bears it all. We, too, should bear it all. No pain and grief, no trouble, no persecution is indeed “unbearable” if we only carry it in humble submission—bowing—to the will of the Father. St. Anthony Mary, therefore, assures us: “*Neither you nor we need to worry about the present troublesome situations and any future ones, since none of us bears the burden as [Jesus] does.*”



ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

### The Painting That Says It All



### The Crucifix

**F**ar in the corner is the symbol of Jesus' love. That love costs him his life.

What great love the Savior has for us! What great pain and suffering he has to endure! What strength of a God-man!

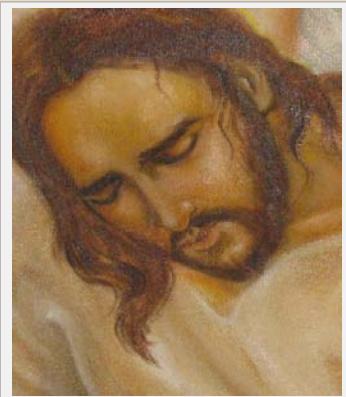
He hangs on the cross in oblation to the Father, to make reparation for our sins. Then, he dies to make his life a sweet offering.

*"I kneel a long time before the Crucifix on your behalf; for I think it is necessary to learn from Him what I have to teach you."* St. Anthony Mary draws his inspiration from the Crucifix. In all his undertakings, he entrusts himself to the One whom he believes could truly help him: *"You can be sure... Jesus Crucified will anticipate and accompany... [our] every holy intention."*

It is no wonder then that in St. Anthony Mary's writings Jesus Crucified pervades: *"All that is required is that you really mean to develop and give back to Jesus Crucified, in a more refined form, the good qualities and graces that He has given you."* *"Be mindful only of this:*

*our Blessed Fathers... have left us such a great example of noble and profound love for Jesus Crucified." "Unfurl your flags, my dear daughters, for Jesus Crucified is about to send you to proclaim everywhere the vital energy of the Spirit." "Remember that... Jesus Crucified has always been abundantly generous with you." "Enter into conversation with Jesus Crucified as familiarly as you would with me." "If you treasure the counsels that I have just given you, you will fall in love with Jesus Crucified quite easily."*

This reveals the saint's great devotion to the crucified One. In fact, together with the Eucharist, St. Anthony Mary's devotion to Jesus Crucified forms part of his spirituality—a spirituality that is both significant and actual.



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ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

**The Painting That Says It All**

**A Closer Look  
at the Crucified  
Savior**

**“I** *It is finished!*" (Jn 19:30) He bows his head and dies. On the cross Jesus hangs lifeless. With bowed head and closed eyes, he dies; rather, he sleeps triumphant for the victory he has won: "All that the Father wills for me."

"Victory" is a word that conveys the paradox of Jesus' death: his death may seem to be his gravest defeat, but in truth it is the greatest victory he ever won on earth.

*"The 'Victory Over Oneself' should be written by me with deeds, not with ink."* St. Anthony Mary speaks of the same word. And he implies the same meaning: "victory over oneself" and "dying to one's self"—two expressions that are synonymous.

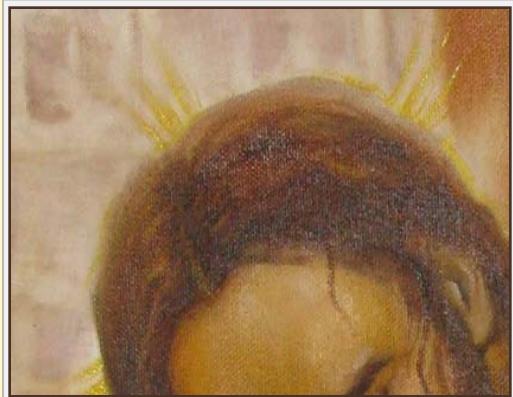
When we die to ourselves, we renounce our own comfort; we deny what we have and are; we give in for the sake of others. These are indeed a victory over ourselves, a victory over our selfish, egoistic nature!

Attached to our nature are our passions: "*As daily experience shows, passions and natural inclinations... are, by their very nature, commonly present*

*in all human beings.*" But they "are present in man for his own great profit." Passions "*in themselves are neither good nor bad.*" Yet St. Anthony Mary recommends: "*by resisting and overcoming them a noble crown is kept for man.*"

When we have overcome these passions in ourselves, we have, therefore, won a battle. "*Thus, my friends, by reviewing the behavior of Christ and his saints, you will find so many praiseworthy examples which show that men did control their passions.*"

"*By total victory over [ourselves], by submission of [our] passions*" we will have imitated Christ who died to himself to win life for us and to bring victory to our defeated humanity!



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ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

**The Painting That Says It All**

**The Light of  
the Risen Christ**

**A**fter what we have said about Jesus' suffering, we know that all does not end there. The sick person that St. Anthony Mary attends to is actually the risen One.

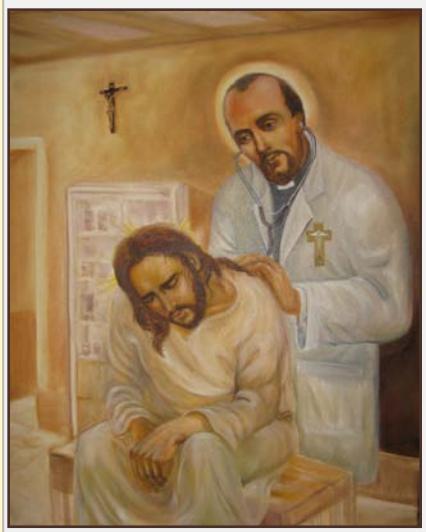
Love conquers all! No human pain, no human suffering and desolation could ever defeat Him who "*came down from heaven to earth: it was He who was able to do it, who knew how, and who had to do it because He chose to become man — true, innocent and undefiled.*" And it was "*the sheer force of love*" that moved him to go through all that he has to go through. For indeed "*it was necessary for [him] to suffer these things and then to enter His glory.*"

*O inaccessible Light!*" Jesus who calls us to be "light of the world" now shines forth his own light. Our great Teacher and Master himself fulfills his Father's command, the first in the beginning of the world, but his final act of obedience: "*Let there be light,' and there was light*" (Genesis 1:3). The world engulfed in darkness, "*it was still dark*" (Jn 20:1), has now seen Light—Jesus the "Light of the world." "*O infinite Goodness, unfathomable*

*Love, God become man! And why? To lead man back to God to teach him the way and give him light."*

St. Anthony Mary evidently agonized when he wrote: "*I lost my pristine light.*" "*I suffered a greater evil when... I lost that light.*" "*It was that light that animated my spiritual life.*" Having experienced the pain of losing this light, he strongly recommends: "*You, too... take care lest you should make the very same mistake I have made, for it is very deplorable to lose that...light that has always given us life.*"

May the light of Christ shine in our hearts and keep it alive as we continue to journey through this life.



ST. ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA

### The Painting That Says It All



## Conclusion

In this room, every holy and perfect converges. God manifests Himself in Jesus, sick yet healthy, helpless yet powerful, dead yet risen.

St. Anthony Mary cures him with attention. Like a faithful disciple following his Master, St. Anthony Mary stays behind Jesus, to learn from him and to follow his examples.

This is a painting that makes you see beyond what the eyes can perceive. It is not only “another” painting to contemplate; it is a painting that has its own value, a value that can only be understood through one’s deep contemplation of its details and an attentive listening to the Master who speaks.

I might not have said anything about the hospital cabinet, but I do not want to miss telling you about the

door... It's open. We are invited to enter or leave as we wish... To live through this "*holy and perfect state*" is up to us to decide.

St. Anthony Mary should encourage us with his words: "*Few, my friends, are those who are willing to enter... and few are those who enter it. Strive to belong to their number, so that you may find yourselves among those few.*"

*"O happy, though difficult, state of life, and found only by few! This is the state to which you are led and called and invited... for this state you have to long and yearn night and day; toward this state all the saints have directed the course of their lives."*

*"May God, the Changeless One, ever ready to do whatever is good, save you and make you steadfast and determined in all your undertakings and desires according to my deepest expectations."*

*"May God grant you some day to savor this true and interior joy. Amen."*

\* All quotes, except those indicated as biblical passages or written by particular authors, are from St. Anthony Mary Zaccaria's writings.

# Behind the Painting's Realization...

**Rev. Fr. Robert B. M. Kosek, CRSP** had long been dreaming of a painting that portrays St. Anthony Mary Zaccaria—founder of the Clerics Regular of St. Paul (Barnabites), Angelic Sisters of St. Paul, and Laity of St. Paul—as a doctor. His dream has finally been realized through the artistic skill of the painter, **Ms. Maria Magdalena Butchart**.

Butchart's painting of St. Anthony Mary conveys a message that encompasses the wisdom of the saint and Jesus' human existence: from his birth to his resurrection. With Jesus' life message entrenched in the words and life experience of St. Anthony Mary Zaccaria, this painting becomes a compelling work of art to meditate upon. If this painting, indeed, has any message to deliver, it is that Jesus lives with us and through us. We never live our life on our own.

*May these meditations, which come from my personal experience with our Divine Master and my keen and devoted study of our Holy Founder's teachings, be for you a source of spiritual impetus as you live your life with Jesus. — **Sr. Rorivic P. Israel, ASP** - Angelic Sisters of St. Paul, December 25, 2012*